

MINUTES
Charter Revision Commission
PUBLIC HEARING
April 21, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Suzanne Burr Monaco called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Long Hill Room, Trumbull, Connecticut. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Suzanne Burr Monaco, Chairman
Dan Portanoa, Vice Chairman
Adam Maiocco, Secretary
Ken Martin
Daniel Shamas
Carl Massaro, Town Council
Barbara Schellenberg, Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Chair invited anyone with public comments to state their name, address and present their suggestions.

STEVE CASTRO of 44 Bull Frog Lane

Indicated that he felt Charter Revision was being driven by the Pension ARC Funding question. He works for Westport and indicated that their ARC is nearly fully funded every year. There are many variables that go into the funding. As you pull people from the plan, you lose the funding for future benefits, therefore causing the ARC to increase. His suggestion for the Charter Revision was to not make pension funding at the ARC mandatory as there are many other areas of the town infrastructure that need attention.

TONY D'AQUILA of 29 Valley View Road

Had a number of Charter Revision suggestions:

1. BOARD OF EDUCATION was formerly 7 Democrats, 2 Republicans and is presently 2 Democrats and 7 Republicans. He feels that this is unfair in that it is impossible for the minority to have fair representation. He suggests that we return back to the 80's format of 6 members, 3 Democrat, 3 Republicans, which will force compromise. He also recommends a 4 year term.

There are presently 7 seats – in 2015 all seats will be up for election. There is presently a 2 minority minimum on the BOE.

2. TOWN COUNCIL – When we had 7 districts, there were 3 reps from each District and 1 had to be minority. There is not presently enough minority representation. Voice of minority critical in a democracy. Presently it is the way the election goes. 4 minority doesn't have a chance.
3. CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION – Should be comprised of 6 members, 3 from each party for active discussion as opposed to majority making up their mind as to what they want to do.
4. WPCA – members should be elected by the users of the sewer system. He feels they do not feel accountable to the public.

5. FLOOD & EROSION CONTROL BOARD – should be reinstated Even though Board hasn't met in 30 years, important for plan of conservation and development. It should not be handled by Inland/Wetlands because it is handled by state statute.
6. MEETING ATTENDANCE – Recommends that the Town Council, all Boards and Commissions be required to attend 50% of meetings in a 12 month period. If this is not adhered to, the position would become vacant.
7. PUBLIC HEARINGS – Hearings called by the Town Council should be heard by the full Council, not just Committees. Everyone on Council should hear public comments.
8. PLANNING & ZONING regulations should be imposed on Town related development. As example, the traffic bottleneck caused by the addition of the pre-school created behind Middlebrook.
9. TRAFFIC AUTHORITY responsibility should be taken from the Police Commission and given to the Town Engineer. Traffic design should be an engineering activity. The Police Commission does not have the engineering background to handle this.
10. Recommendation that the Charter mandates that all Boards, Commissions and Town Council have a public period before each meeting.
11. Prior to any final vote of the Town Council, the public has the right to be heard on the motion to be considered. This is done in Westport.
12. INLAND WETLANDS/WATERCOURSE COMMISSION all members and alternates should be elected.
13. Eliminate the 3 fire districts and establish a Fire Commission, allowing the Town to fund the volunteer departments. Lack of accountability in terms of funding, ie., every district has a hook & ladder. If it is funded by the Town, it would be more uniform.

There being no further public comment, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Dan S, seconded by Ken M. and unanimous consent at 7:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Milewski